

MINNESOTA  **2017**
GOVERNOR'S FISHING OPENER
GREATER ST. CLOUD
MISSISSIPPI RIVER

#MNGFO2017 

Thursday, May 11, to Sunday, May 14, 2017

The Greater St. Cloud area is excited to bring you the 2017 Minnesota Governor's Fishing Opener. This will be a year to remember! This area is full of unique activities and attractions; you will not want to miss one minute of the action. Make sure you're fully informed on the event details below, and contact us with any questions you have as you get ready to reel in a weekend worthy of the greatest fish tales.

Registration

Don't miss out on any of the action. Registration is mandatory to attend any part of the event, even if you are not lodging. Registration must be completed online at:

Registration Link: RegOnline.com/2017gfo

Registration Deadline is Friday, April 28, 2017

Lodging

Make the most of your time by staying in one of our friendly, convenient hotels. All lodging will be coordinated through registration. **Please do not contact lodging properties directly.** For questions regarding lodging, please call Rachel Thompson at (320)202-6728. Pre-formed groups/roommates are encouraged. If you plan to carpool, have special requests, or have a preferred lodging partner, please indicate this on your registration. You will receive your lodging assignments at the end of April via email. Lodging properties will require a credit card upon check-in for incidentals.

THURSDAY NIGHT LODGING: If you plan to arrive Thursday night, please know there is a \$50/per person fee. All payments are due before the event begins. We are unable to accept payments during registration.

Payment should be payable to: St. Cloud Area Sports Commission

Mail your payment to: c/o Explore Minnesota, 322 Laurel Street, Suite 32, Brainerd, MN 56401

We are unable to accept credit card payments. Only checks will be accepted.

Media

We are very excited to have media guests in town for this event. Please indicate in the comments section of your registration form if you would like to broadcast and/or need interview arrangements.

MNGovernorsopener.com

Fishing

If you are registering for fishing or a photographer's boat, it is mandatory to attend the **Fishing Host Pairing Meeting at 7 p.m. on Friday, May 12, at River's Edge Convention Center in the Glen Carlson Room**. Please be considerate of the volunteer fishing hosts.

Greater St. Cloud is excited to announce new types of fishing opportunities at this year's opener. Each type of fishing allows for a different experience, and we will do our best to pair you with your preference indicated on your registration.

There will be, for the first time ever, shore fishing available. This will happen on the beautiful banks of the Mississippi River, with the ability to capture stunning shots of the sun rising, view boaters passing by, catch exceptional fish, and access parts of the river only navigable by shore. This is one opportunity you do not want to miss!

Mississippi River boat fishing and lake boat fishing will also be offered. These two types of fishing are more common to this event, but done with a Greater St. Cloud spin. Imagine yourself on a propless jet boat tackling the river, or exploring the nooks and crannies of our local "honey holes." Regardless of which type of fishing you are given the opportunity to explore, we can guarantee a fun and eventful experience.

Activities

With tours, banquets, golfing, picnics and more, there are many fun activities planned for this year's event. Included in the invitation, and in the online registration, are details about each of those planned activities. Only registered guests may attend these activities. You may register for one morning and one afternoon tour, but please note that some tours do overlap slightly in time. All morning activities will include lunch, and afternoon tours will have you back to headquarters in time to attend the Community Picnic. Transportation will be provided. Golf will be offered on Thursday, May 11, at Blackberry Ridge Golf Club. Registration for this event is included in your online event registration.

Please indicate activity preferences on your online registration.

Registration Link: RegOnline.com/2017gfo

Registration Deadline is Friday, April 28, 2017

Also, check out new information, story ideas and schedule of events at mngovernorsopener.com.

Registration Questions: Dawn Bushman, dawn.bushman@state.mn.us, 888-629-6466

For Lodging Questions: Rachel Thompson, rachel@visitstcloud.com, 320-202-6728

Media Questions: Alyssa Hayes, alyssa.hayes@state.mn.us, 651-757-1857

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Friday Tours

With so much to do and see in the St. Cloud area, it's tough to limit it to only one day. But to get you started, we've outlined below the planned tours taking place on Friday, May 12. We hope you will come back another time to do even more!

Please sign up for the tours you are interested in using the Online Event Registration. You will notice there are both morning and afternoon tours taking place - we encourage you to participate in tours from each time slot, if possible. Also note there are capacity limits for each of these tours, so earlier registration will better guarantee your preferred spot. If you wish to do any of these tours on your own, or would like to learn about other activities and attractions in the area, you will find further details and contact information at MNGovernorsOpener.com.

Morning Tours

Saints & Sinners	8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Intro to Kayak Fishing	9 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Paddling the Beaver Islands	9 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Granite City Rocks	9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Afternoon Tours

Intro to Kayak Fishing	12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Granite City Rocks	1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Bike with the Flow	1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Jetting the Mississippi	1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Intro to Kayak Fishing

Morning shuttle will leave River's Edge Convention Center at 9 a.m. and return at 12 p.m. Afternoon shuttle will leave River's Edge Convention Center at 12:30 p.m. and return at 3:30 p.m.

See how one of the fastest-growing sports in America is taking off in Central Minnesota and being used to target one of the top 10 bass fisheries in the country. Clear Waters Outfitting in Clearwater will train you on the basics of kayak fishing, the equipment used for the sport, and skills to use while kayak fishing. You will also get the chance to try it on the Mississippi (weather permitting) with all the gear provided by Clear Waters Outfitting. Box lunch will be provided (morning only).

Paddling the Beaver Islands

Shuttle will leave River's Edge Convention Center at 9 a.m. and return at 12 p.m.

Come prepared to get a taste of the sport and get an up close experience on the Mississippi River to see these famed islands named by explorer Zebulon Pike of Pike's Peak. You will be shuttled to your takeoff point at Beaver Island landing, listen to a brief history of the scenic area, and be outfitted with all of your gear by Clear Waters Outfitting. Then you will kayak from that landing to River Bluffs Regional Park landing, where you will meet the shuttle back to the River's Edge Convention Center. Box lunch will be provided.

Plan your own tour:
MNGovernorsOpener.com

Saints and Sinners

Shuttle will leave River's Edge Convention Center at 8 a.m. and return at 1 p.m.

With a rich history and incredibly beautiful setting, St. John's University is one of the area's most scenic historic areas. On this tour, you can enjoy learning about the internationally lauded St. John's illuminated Bible project, follow a guided tour of the grounds with one of the monks from St. John's Monastery, experience the local culture with artisan bread and the green efforts of the university, and more. Following the time at St. John's, get ready to switch gears at Anton's Restaurant for lunch, learning all about the "Minnesota 13" bootleggers and enjoying delicious local cuisine right on the Sauk River.

Granite City Rocks

Morning shuttle will leave River's Edge Convention Center at 9 a.m. and return at 1 p.m. Afternoon shuttle will leave River's Edge Convention Center at 1 p.m. and return at 3:30 p.m.

Spanning 220 acres and housing 20 former granite quarries, Quarry Park and Nature Preserve is a beautiful testament to the industry that put Central Minnesota on the map. All year long, locals and visitors can enjoy the natural wonders that Quarry Park has to offer. On this tour, you can enjoy a guided tour of the park and several of the quarries. Following the tour, (morning only) you can expect a fun, educational, and delicious lunch at Anton's Restaurant – a former speakeasy with the "Minnesota 13" bootleggers located on the Sauk River.

Bike with the Flow

Attendees will meet at River's Edge Convention Center at 1:30 p.m. and return at 3:30 p.m.

Take a spin like a local along the Mississippi River, including a stretch of the new Beaver Island Trail bridge extension, a trip past the famous Munsinger Gardens, and a tour around River Bluffs and Beaver Island Trail. Guided by local biking experts, this tour will give you a look at the Mississippi from a whole new perspective.

Jetting the Mississippi

Shuttle will leave River's Edge Convention Center at 1:30 p.m. and return at 3:30 p.m.

Get ready for an adrenaline-pumping tour of the Beaver Islands on the Mississippi River. Fast and exhilarating, you will experience the scenic area like never before: on a jet boat. Brought to you by the Minnesota DNR and captained by several experienced river hosts, this tour will be fun and educational for all attendees.

Plan your own tour:
MNGovernorsOpener.com

Schedule of Events

Thursday, May 11, 2017

Registration	9 a.m. to 9 p.m.	Best Western Kelly Inn Plus - Lobby
Golf Event	11 a.m. to 5 p.m.	Blackberry Ridge Golf Course - Sartell, MN
Activity	11 a.m. to 11 p.m.	Taste of Downtown, St. Cloud

Friday, May 12, 2017

Complimentary Breakfast	5:30 a.m. to 8 a.m.	River's Edge
Registration	8 a.m. to 9 p.m.	Best Western Kelly Inn Plus - Lobby
Live Radio Shows	5 a.m. to 10 a.m.	River's Edge - River Commons/Opportunity Suites
Tours	8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.	See Below

Tours

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See enclosed for tour descriptions

Kids Fishing Event	9 a.m. to 1 p.m.	Lake George
Community Program	4 p.m.	Lake George
Community Picnic	4 p.m. to 8 p.m.	Lake George
Fishing Host Pairing	7 p.m.	River's Edge - Glen Carlson

Saturday, May 13, 2017

Complimentary Breakfast	5:30 a.m. to 8 a.m.	River's Edge - Glen Carlson
Registration	6 a.m. to 9 a.m.	Wilson Park
Fishing Send Off Ceremony	8 a.m.	Wilson Park
Shore Lunch	11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.	Wilson Park
Fishing Challenge Ends	4 p.m.	Wilson Park/Best Western - Lobby
Celebration Reception	5:30 p.m.	River's Edge - Glen Carlson
Celebration Dinner	6:30 p.m.	River's Edge - Glen Carlson

Sunday, May 14, 2017

Breakfast	6 a.m. to 8 a.m.	Courtyard by Marriott
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